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5 The Universal Value of Teacher Education for Inclusive Education

Lani Florian

Abstract

While it is axiomatic that contextual differences between educational jurisdictions and regions means that inclusive education will be defined and enacted in distinctive ways in different arenas, the principle of education as a human right, a universal entitlement that belongs to each and every person without discrimination, reflects a universal value that transcends contextual differences. This chapter considers the role that teacher education can play to ensure that teachers in different jurisdictions can meet the challenges of inclusive education despite the distinctive barriers imposed by structural differences between national systems that can obscure commonalities.

*Regardless of weather,
The moon shines the same;
It is the drifting clouds
That make it seem different
On different nights*
(attributed to Basho, 17th century).

1. Introduction

Inclusive education is an approach to education for all that focuses on reducing barriers to participation in education for marginalized individuals and groups (UNESCO 2017). It emerged in the Western world in the 1980s in response to concerns about the exclusion of *some* learners from that which was provided to *most* others based on education policies that provided different forms of education for different types of learners, notably special education for learners with special educational needs. At the time, a growing awareness of the tautological nature of the concept of ‘special needs’ along with difficulties in identification of special educational needs and poor outcomes for learners so identified led to a view of special needs education as a discriminatory practice reliant on a process of sorting and separating some learners from that which is available to others (Florian 2014, 2019; Thomas/Loxley 2001; Tomlinson 1982; 2017). As an alternative, inclusive education, based on the idea that local schools should provide for all learners on the grounds that education is a human right that must be provided without discrimination emerged as a strategy to offset what was considered the exclusionary nature of separate forms of provision for some learners (Peters 2007).

The rights-based anti-discriminatory idea of inclusive education aligned well with *Education for All (EFA)*, the global movement initiated by the international community in 1990 to ensure that the benefits of education are available to everyone. Although the concept of inclusive education had initially emerged in response to the exclusion of learners with special educational needs, this focus broadened over time, as the EFA agenda broadened. Today, the alignment of EFA and inclusive education is expressed clearly by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4: *Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning for all*. As the accompanying World Education Forum vision for Education 2030 states:

Inclusion and equity in and through education is the cornerstone of a transformative education agenda, and we therefore commit to addressing all forms of exclusion and marginalization, disparities and inequalities in access, participation and learning outcomes (UNESCO 2015, iv).

This view reflects the ongoing commitment of the international community to ensure basic education for everyone. However, the significant disparities reflected in global measures of inequality mean that what is needed to achieve this vision will vary. Consequently, it is inevitable that inclusive education will be defined and enacted in distinctive ways in different areas depending on how national systems of schooling are organized and who has access to them (Ainscow/Miles 2008). How can a human right entitlement such as education be provided to everyone without discrimination when education is defined and enacted in distinctive ways in different countries and world regions? This chapter considers this question with a specific focus on the role that teacher education can play to ensure that teachers in different jurisdictions can meet the challenges of inclusive education regardless of the distinctive barriers imposed by structural differences between national systems.

1.1 Background

For many years, the contextual differences between various educational jurisdictions (local, national, and regional) led researchers and advocates of inclusion to argue that it could only be understood in the context in which it occurred (Booth/Ainscow 1998). A long period of research provided a rich literature that documented the many different ways in which policies of inclusive education were enacted throughout the world. A recent review (Göransson/Nilholm 2014: 265) identified four distinct understandings of inclusive education: (a) inclusion as the placement of pupils with disabilities in mainstream classrooms, (b) inclusion as meeting the social/academic needs of pupils with disabilities, (c) inclusion as meeting the social/academic needs of all pupils and (d) inclusion as creation of communities.

These understandings reflect two interrelated issues. The first is a legacy issue. That is, the association of inclusive education with special needs education. However, who gets identified as having special educational needs varies within and between countries. Moreover, socio-economic disadvantage and gender have strong associations with the identification of special educational needs. There are also concerns with ethnic disproportionality in special needs statistics that varies across both categories of special need and minority ethnic group. In some countries, the concept of special educational needs extends beyond those who may be included in disability categories to cover those who are failing in school for a variety of reasons. Consequently, the very idea of categorical descriptions of special need has been

challenged in favour of a broader understanding that anyone may experience difficulties or encounter barriers to learning during the school years. This broader understanding reframed inclusion as an equity issue.

As researchers have explored these different understandings of inclusive education, the idea that the meaning of inclusion would take different forms in various places depending on the situation was increasingly reflected in definitions that emphasized inclusive education as: “a *process*” (Booth/Ainscow 2002); or, “an *approach* to education embodying particular values” (Ainscow et al. 2006, p. 5, emphasis added) that is located in a broader policy context of standards-based educational reforms that promote academic achievement and competition between schools and jurisdictions as a measure of effectiveness (Rouse/Florian 1997; Florian/Rouse 2014). Such understandings raise important questions about how teachers can and should be prepared for the demands of inclusive education. These questions are important not only because inclusive education is a rights-based approach, but because it is a complex and sometimes contested concept that is enacted within larger national systems of education that creates multiple and sometimes conflicting demands on teachers in schools that are increasingly diverse (Florian/Pantic 2017).

Today, the rights-based principle of inclusion encapsulated in SDG 4, epitomizes the principle of education as a human right, a universal entitlement that belongs to each and every person without discrimination (ICRC 2015: 11). The UNESCO (2015) *Framework for Action on Inclusive and Equitable Education* which guides the implementation of SDG 4 with a fifteen-year vision for education is reinforced by the Brussels Declaration, an outcome of the 2018 Global Education Meeting, which defined inclusive education as:

[...] the right to safe, quality education and learning throughout life [...] that requires particular attention be given to those in vulnerable situations, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, those in remote rural areas, ethnic minorities, the poor, women and girls, migrants, refugees, and displaced persons whether as a result of conflict or natural disaster.

As can be seen by the range of people and circumstances considered to be vulnerable, inclusive education is about everyone. Accordingly, responding to issues of diversity becomes a central imperative of teaching practice rather than a secondary consideration to be dealt with separately.

Over the past decade, since the 48th International Conference on Education (ICE), *Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future* (UNESCO 2008: 5), concluded with six recommendations specific to teacher education and development, there has been growing international recognition of the importance of preparing classroom teachers for inclusive education. The six recommendations were to:

- (1) Reinforce the role of teachers by working to improve their status and their working conditions, and develop mechanisms for recruiting suitable candidates, and retain qualified teachers who are sensitive to different learning requirements;
- (2) Train teachers by equipping them with the appropriate skills and materials to teach diverse student populations and meet the diverse learning needs of different categories of learners through methods such as professional development at the school level, pre-service training about inclusion, and instruction attentive to the development and strengths of the individual learner;
- (3) Support the strategic role of tertiary education in the pre-service and professional training of teachers on inclusive education practices through, *inter alia*, the provision of adequate resources;

- (4) Encourage innovative research in teaching and learning processes related to inclusive education;
- (5) Equip school administrators with the skills to respond effectively to the diverse needs of all learners and promote inclusive education in their schools; and
- (6) Take into consideration the protection of learners, teachers, and schools in times of conflict.

These recommendations reflect the complex terrain of teacher education. They serve as a reminder that inclusion in education occurs within a broader socio-political context of education that depends on teachers who are adequately prepared to understand and respond to the many different kinds of barriers that learners might encounter during schooling. From an international perspective, the focus on removing barriers is considered to be of particular relevance in creating educational opportunities for all school age children and youth to attend local schools. While these barriers will inevitably reflect differences in context that will be important to address, this chapter argues that these should not obscure important commonalities. For example, there is growing awareness throughout the world that the traditional systemic responses of providing special needs education as a strategy to ensure education for all can be a barrier to participation because it excludes some pupils from the opportunities that are available to others. And although inclusive education challenges the concept of special needs education as “different from” or “additional to” that which is provided for the majority of learners as a discriminatory practice, tensions arise when national policies of inclusive education rely on special needs practices, such as individualized education plans (IEPs) because these practices risk marginalizing students within education systems by focusing attention on their problems (Florian, 2019). Awareness of the structural problems of special education has given way to inclusive education as an alternative but the traditional mechanism for accommodating the increasing diversity of an expanding education system on the grounds that something different (for some learners) to that which is available to others of similar age (most learners) is deeply embedded, as the four meanings of inclusion identified by Göransson and Nilholm (2014) made clear.

2. The Complex Terrain of Teacher Education for Inclusive Education

2.1 Structural Barriers

Structurally, teacher education programs are often based on ideas of different types of teachers for different groups of learners: for example, “primary”, “secondary”, or “subject specialists”, “general” or “special” education teachers. While these programmes may include courses addressing various aspects of diversity or difference, they are often offered as free-standing courses or options within programmes rather than integrated elements of teacher preparation. Even in countries where there are fewer types of programmes leading to qualified teacher status, specialist “options” are often available to enable teachers to undertake further education or higher degree study in particular areas such as special educational needs. However, Winn and Blanton (2005) have noted that separate teacher education programs

serve as a barrier to inclusion because they reinforce the idea that different types of courses and qualifications are needed to prepare teachers to teach different types of students. And Young (2008) noted that it perpetuates the problem of teachers feeling inadequately prepared to teach increasingly diverse student groups (Young, 2008). Yet,

Equipping teachers for full range of diversity of students in today's schools has long been a shared concern among teacher educators. Bilingual education, special education, culturally responsive teaching, social justice education, and urban education are among the several responses to this fundamental educational goal. These responses, however, while critical for moving the project of educational equity forward, have tended to produce conversations within diversity communities in teacher education rather than across them (Pugach, et al. 2012: 235).

It is unsurprising that inclusive education, with its origins as a response to what was widely viewed as a key problem associated with special needs education, has predominantly focused on preparing teachers to teach learners with special educational needs, and/or reforms to the preparation of special education teachers. While this focus aligns with the conventional view that specialised knowledge is needed to teach particular groups, Cochran-Smith and Dudley-Marling (2012) have suggested that presenting issues of diversity as distinct and separate content marginalises them within teacher education programs. Moreover, a focus on unitary markers of identity such as special educational needs status does little to address the transformation of education, called for by the Education 2030 agenda of inclusion and equity in and through education by *addressing all forms of exclusion and marginalization, disparities and inequalities in access, participation and learning outcomes* (UNESCO 2015: iv).

In the United States, for example, the emphasis on the different types of teacher education programs with different curricula focused on knowledge and skills unique to underpinning disciplinary perspectives have prompted reform efforts that focus on collaboration between sectors such as collaborative teacher education programs where preservice teachers can obtain qualifications as both general and special education teachers (Blanton/Pugach 2007, 2011, 2012). In other countries, such as those of the United Kingdom where nationally mandated qualifications for teachers of pupils with special educational needs have been eliminated (with the exception of teachers of blind and deaf pupils), in favour of professional development and advanced qualifications for experienced teachers, integrating knowledge about inclusion through additional courses about special educational needs and other options remains problematic. In both situations, limiting content knowledge about the concept of inclusive education to addressing special educational needs runs the risk of reproducing content that focuses on how to accommodate differences between learners rather than on more holistic educational approaches that work for everyone. To date, there has been very little research on whether and how these integrated elements work together in a coherent manner. In which ways does the diversified nature of teacher education affect the capacity of teacher education to prepare teachers to deliver on the promise of inclusive education? How can programmes of teacher education respond to the ongoing concerns of teachers who report that they do not have the knowledge or skills to teach diverse learner groups because they do not have the specialized knowledge that is needed to teach particular groups? The following sections consider some of the key issues that need to be addressed in order to answer these questions as well as some of the efforts that have been made to do so.

2.2 Content Knowledge

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993, 1999) suggest that the most effective teachers combine practical skills with the ability to understand and use research and other evidence for developing their teaching and university-based providers of teacher education are steeped in this tradition. But what do teachers need to know and be able to do if they are to teach in inclusive schools? The answers to this question reflect the legacy and equity issues discussed above. There are two distinct views about the nature of content knowledge. One holds that additional information about special educational needs and other differences is essential. The other emphasizes critical analysis of the structure of schooling that is thought to produce individual needs (Skrtric 1991; Tomlinson 1992, 2017).

Consequently, some recommend more content knowledge about different types of disabilities and difficulties (e.g. Hodkinson 2005; Jones 2006) be “infused” into existing courses, or “topped up” with specialist courses. These responses are now widespread in many countries. In a cross regional study (Australia, Hong Kong, Canada, and Singapore), Sharma, Forlin, and Lorman (2008) reported that although both add-on courses and infusion models of embedding content knowledge into teacher education courses were effective in promoting positive attitudes about inclusive education, it was the pedagogical approach taken within the model, rather than the model itself, that appeared to have the greatest impact on attitudes. However, there is little evidence that attempts to “infuse” additional knowledge into existing courses, or to “top up” with specialist courses have led to changes in teaching practice. Many teachers still report feeling unprepared for inclusive education.

Others (e.g. Slee 2007) have argued that special education content knowledge is not adequate to improve inclusive practice in schools because it is not sufficiently linked to the broader pedagogical and curriculum imperatives that trainee teachers have to learn and be able to apply. It is thought that the additional special education knowledge that is added-on to the teacher education course may not be sufficient for student teachers to act upon when teaching. In the 1990s, the UNESCO Special Needs in the Classroom project was introduced to an international audience of practicing special and regular education teachers (Ainscow 1994). Rather than a focus on disability categories per se, this project emphasized removing the barriers to learning and participation as they are encountered by learners. Informed by a social model of disability, this project followed an approach to preparing teachers, which does not depend on the identification of particular forms of disability or difficulty (Allan 2006; Booth et al. 2003; Gabel 2005). However, this approach has also been criticized insofar as some knowledge about human differences is important – a student who is an English language learner is different from a student with Down Syndrome, and so forth. However, in a study of teacher development for inclusive education in the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, and Serbia), Pantić, Closs and Ivošević (2011) found narrow conceptualizations of inclusive education focused only on children with disabilities to be a barrier to social and educational inclusion.

While there is considerable consensus that teachers need to be well prepared to work with diverse student groups and broad acknowledgement that teachers are not adequately prepared, the different perspectives on which contents should inform teacher education and professional development suggests a fragmented and partial literature that reflects ongoing debates about the concept of inclusive education rather than a solid knowledge base. Blanton and Pugach (2012) undertook a content analysis of a sample of collaborative programmes of

teacher education in the US but found that although the programmes espoused a commitment to the values of inclusion, the content was generally “additive” in that special education content knowledge was added to programmes as opposed to programmes reflecting content that was transformational in rethinking issues of diversity and the responses to it. A recent study in Ireland (Hick et al. 2018) reported a similar finding.

2.3 Teacher Education Practice

Thus, despite various efforts that have been made to address issues of diversity and difference in teacher education in diverse contexts, it is important to note that the knowledge base about these issues remains fragmented. As Cochran-Smith and her colleagues (2015) have noted, one of the biggest gaps in evidence about how successful different teacher education programs are in preparing students for dealing with increasing diversity of school populations is the impact on student teachers’ practices. This is in part because research on teacher education has not had the level of sustained investment that has enabled other areas of educational research to establish the kind of robust knowledge that could confidently answer key questions about what teachers need to believe, know and do to support inclusive and equitable education for everyone.

Nevertheless, there are some strong arguments in favour of Slee’s (2007) argument that special education content knowledge is not adequate to improve inclusive practice in schools because it is insufficiently linked to the broader pedagogical and curriculum imperatives that trainee teachers have to learn and be able to apply. A growing awareness of a gap between what teachers *know* as a result of their courses, and what they *do* in their classrooms, clearly suggests that new approaches to teaching about how to effectively and equitably respond to human difference and diversity are needed. To this end, there have been some cross-national and regional efforts to develop teacher competences for inclusive education, and a number of research and development projects (e.g., Allan 2011; Deppler 2017; EADSNE 2012; Oyler 2006; Rouse/Florian 2012) have moved in this direction. Florian and Pantić (2017: 3) synthesized these projects within the broader literature about the knowledge, skills and values teachers need to be effective with diverse groups of students, as encapsulating:

- integration of theoretical and practical knowledge and skills;
- building relationships for improved learning outcomes;
- being able to develop a pedagogy that is inclusive of all;
- collaborative skills and attitudes;
- recognizing the importance of home environment and working with diverse families;
- broader understanding of educational change and how it affects the conditions for learning in contexts of exclusion and disadvantage; and
- capacity for reflection and inquiry accounting for moral values and commitment to education for all.

Inclusive education requires that all teachers should be prepared in ways that support a view of difference as to be expected within the remit of classroom teaching. Such a view is predicated on the premise that there is an inherent bias in education systems that are designed for *most* students, on the grounds that something different can be provided to *some* as a means of ensuing access for all (e.g. Fendler/Muzaffar 2008; Hart 1998). The idea that all learners

are unique individuals and differences are to be expected as an ordinary aspect of human development is an essential first step in breaking down the barriers erected following the idea that different types of teachers are needed to teach different types of learners.

2.4 The Diversity Construct

Menter (2017) maintains that diversity of the teaching workforce links to how issues of learner diversity are understood. He noted that while the range of people entering the teaching workforce should be representative of the social spectrum of the population, in many jurisdictions this is not the case. Teachers tend to be trained locally for jobs in their home countries where teaching qualifications are regulated within national systems of education. However, in many jurisdictions, increasing mobility and migration mean that national populations are more diverse than ever before. This has led to a “diversity gap” between the demographics of the teaching workforce and student populations. This gap reflects differences in languages spoken, socio-economic status, religion, prior cultural experiences and so forth, leading to misunderstandings that can create disadvantages affecting teaching and learning. This is commonly acknowledged in the idea that teachers need to be prepared to meet the challenges of “diversity”. However, this idea positions diversity as a problem to be addressed rather than as a fact of demographic change (Florian 2017).

While there have been attempts in some counties to diversify routes into teaching, these efforts may or may not be aimed at diversifying the teaching workforce. Diversification serves many agendas, such as increasing the number of qualified candidates selecting teaching as a career option (Murray/Mutton 2016). Reforms that aim to address problems of teacher shortage rather than diversification of the workforce may or may not be helpful to reach this goal.

2.5 Global Disparities

The UNESCO Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Reports, together with the international literature, provide an overview of many global disparities in educational provision and differences in approaches to teacher education and teacher qualifications in different regions of the world.

As a consequence, issues of teacher preparation and development as part of the Education 2030 agenda must attend to more than noting disparities in teacher quality, qualifications, supply, and deployment. Projects that examine teachers’ work, working conditions and career pathways are also needed (e.g. Robertson/Sorenson 2017). The challenge for teacher education is to prepare teachers who can respond when students encounter barriers to learning because in all countries there are students who are identified as having some kind of special or additional support needs. Consequently, there is much to be learned from experiences elsewhere. Comparative work on teacher education can help to answer questions about whether legacy or equity approaches to equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills to teach diverse learner groups are most effective under different conditions.

The Global Education Monitoring Report (GMR) provides an annual summary on progress towards the education targets in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The concept note for the forthcoming 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report on Inclusion (UNESCO 2018) reflected international concern about the preparedness of teachers, school leaders and education support personnel to ensure that they are prepared to accommodate students of all abilities and backgrounds.

However, in countries where the teachers themselves are products of poor education systems and their professional training is meager, improving teacher education is a tall order. Global disparities in teacher qualifications and teacher education that exist in different parts of the world are compounded by other differences that reflect regional and national conditions.

2.5.1 Regional Differences

Pantić, Closs and Ivošević (2011) identified systemic barriers in the education system, unconnected professional education for different levels of school staff, lack of competences for inclusive education, and concern that faculty-based teacher educators lack the knowledge needed to develop effective pre-service programs as challenges for the development of teacher education for inclusion in the Western Balkans. Walton and Rusznyak (2019a: 103) note that standards for teacher education in South Africa “reflect a codified but abstracted vision of inclusive teaching” that is shown in substantial variation across university providers of teacher education in South Africa. This concurs with research in Europe (EADSNE 2011) that has documented a wide range of initial teacher education courses of varying lengths and contents with fewer than one in ten European countries offering a specialization in special education during initial teacher education. Where this qualification does exist, it is generally offered at the post-graduate level for experienced teachers. Where teacher education is not a university-based profession, or where the demand for teachers far outstrips supply, countries are forced to rely on unqualified or under-qualified teachers. In such cases, non-governmental organisations play an important role in providing professional development opportunities to teachers.

Clearly these issues are of broad relevance across regions and the regional and intraregional responses that are developed will reflect cultural and socioeconomic differences as well as differences in national teaching qualifications and preparation of teachers. In some countries teaching is a high-status profession with good salaries; in others, teaching is undertaken in extremely difficult circumstances and salaries are barely enough to subsist. Yet despite huge variations, there is considerable consistency in terms of the issues identified.

2.5.2 National Differences

In recent years, a growing number of teacher educators around the world have begun to describe some initiatives and articulate their ideas about how teacher education for inclusion might progress. McIntyre (2009) cautioned that the discontinuity between what pre-service teachers learn in university and what they learn in school, especially in contexts where practice is not well established could create barriers to preparing teachers for inclusion. He suggested that teacher educators work collaboratively with colleagues in schools if they aim to do more than promote a theoretical idea. To this end, some promising examples have been

described in the literature. For example, in Iceland, research has focused on university-school partnerships in teacher education and professional learning and how these partnerships might develop to support inclusive teacher education (Sigurdardóttir 2010). A paper from Cyprus (Symeonidou/Phtiaka 2009) describes how practicing teachers' prior knowledge could be used to develop relevant university courses for teachers interested in developing inclusive practice. Recently, Walton and Rusznyak (2019b) proposed a framework for bridging coursework and practicum experiences as a way to strengthen the synergies between them.

Within countries, a range of approaches have been described. For example, Bartolo (2010) explained how a rights-based approach to initial teacher education in Malta in which courses formerly focused on "handicaps in learning" were replaced with those that focus on removing barriers to learning and responding to student diversity. In the United States, efforts to move teacher education towards a more unified or holistic approach to preparing all teachers has focused on the development of collaborative approaches that increase the special education knowledge of general education teachers and ensure that special education teachers have sufficient background in academic content knowledge (Pugach/Blanton 2009).

However, studies of the impact of national changes to initial teacher education for inclusion suggest that these models have yet to be embedded systematically despite policy reforms of teacher education to ensure that teachers are prepared and supported to meet the goals of inclusive education. For example, in Ireland, a study (Hick et al. 2018) found that providers implemented reforms in different ways across universities. Another recent report from Iceland (Guðjónsdóttir/Óskarsdóttir 2019) found different views on how to prepare teachers for inclusive education *within* universities.

Clearly, understanding how well teachers are prepared for inclusive education needs to take account of regional and national disparities in teacher qualifications, supply and deployment, and broader issues regarding the quality and content of teacher preparation. But a knowledge base for teacher education for inclusion also needs to be established (EADSNE 2012; Florian/Young/Rouse 2010). While the form and structure of teacher education varies, the common issues and challenges of meeting SDG 4 create an agenda for teacher development at all levels. Teacher education offers a good case to consider how surface issues can be different but underpinning similar values.

3. Values-based Approaches Offer a Point of Convergence

While it is reasonable to expect that there will be differences that reflect particular situational and contextual aspects of vulnerability for marginalised groups, the values-based notion of inclusive education offers a point of convergence whereby it is possible that practices that may appear different can be constitutive of inclusion and some practices thought to support one group also benefit others, whether expected or not. Teacher education for inclusive education is a complex task located within persistent questions about how diverse groups of learners can be supported, and strong views about the particular needs of different vulnerable groups with disagreements about how to respond in terms of both the form and content of provision. In addition, the entrenched idea that specialist interventions are needed to offset disadvantage – the positioning of difference as a problem – reinforces the idea that teachers are not equipped to teach all students because separate teacher education programs reinforce implicit assumptions about what teachers need to know to teach different groups of students.

A response to this problem was developed by Scotland's Inclusive Practice Project (IPP), a research and development project funded by the Scottish Government between 2006 and 2010, to develop an approach to initial teacher education that would ensure that *all* teachers had greater awareness, understanding and skill in responding to the many problems that can affect children's learning (Rouse/Florian 2012). In order to ensure that the approach was relevant to all university-based providers of initial teacher education, the Scottish Council of Deans, set up a working group consisting of teacher education course directors and inclusion specialists from each university to develop collaboratively a Framework to guide the development of practice (Barrett et al. 2015). The remit of the group was to identify: the values and beliefs; the professional knowledge and understanding; and the skills and abilities expected of student teachers and of qualified teachers throughout their careers. In other words, to specify the habits of the head, the hand, and the heart that constitute professional learning (Shulman 2007).

The resulting *Framework for Inclusion* built upon the curricular approach to teacher education developed by the IPP based on the concept of *inclusive pedagogy*, an approach to teaching diverse groups of learners that was derived from studying the practices of expert teachers who have been able to be inclusive of a wide range of pupils in their classrooms and get good attainment results for everyone (Black-Hawkins et al. 2007; Florian/Black-Hawkins 2011). The principles underpinning this approach assume that:

- Teachers view differences between learners as an ordinary aspect of human development;
- they view difficulties in learning as dilemmas for teaching rather than problems of learners; and
- they actively seek support to ensure that individual needs are catered for in ways that do not marginalize learners or exclude them from the opportunities that are available to others.

In other words, as teachers they value the dignity of each and every learner. They value their professional role in ensuring that learners are treated fairly, without discrimination; and they value the opportunity to collaborate with others to ensure that everyone is able to participate and within the community of the classroom. This includes other professionals, families and learners themselves. It often finds expression in the activities that teachers engage with outside of the classroom, for example, through professional development or extra-curricular activities.

The Scottish working group used the General Teaching Council Scotland (GTCS) Standards as a context for exploring the implications for inclusion as an aspect of teacher education. Working through a process of building consensus, they identified the Standards they considered most relevant for developing the habits of the head, hand and heart linked to the core values of inclusive pedagogy. The group then generated a series of questions intended to assist student teachers, teachers and teacher educators to examine the implications of the Standards for the development of inclusive practice. In this way, the *Framework for Inclusion* provided a map that linked core values associated with inclusive practice to the national teaching standards. The questions enabled each program team to generate distinctive answers that were not prescriptive of practice. As an approach to developing teaching competencies, the *Framework* proved useful because the values that underpin it are shared. Subsequently, the principles of inclusive pedagogy were elaborated to include the possible ways in which it might be expected to manifest in practice (Florian/Spratt 2013; Spratt/Florian 2015). Determining if, when and how student teachers enact the values underpinning an inclusive pedagogical approach as promoted by their programs requires evidence of the enactment of

those values in the practices of teachers, knowing that practice will always vary according to the school context and the individuality of the learners in each class. Similar responses to individual differences between learners in a classroom may or may not be inclusive depending on the context of teachers' actions, their planning, their reasoning or the history behind a particular interaction. Rather than comparing the behavior of teachers in different contexts, it is important to look for evidence that practice aligns with the principles and values of inclusion. In this way it is possible to make meaningful comparisons about practice despite inevitable variation in context. Inequalities and discrepancies associated with context are important, but they can obscure rather than drive the development of practice.

4. Conclusion

This chapter traced the origins of inclusive education and its development as a key component of SDG4. It reviewed how issues of diversity and difference have long been, and in many contexts still are, considered specialist knowledge with the task of preparing teachers for inclusive education predominately undertaken by special educators within university departments of special education. Consequently, its reach has been confined mainly to special education teachers. However, a growing awareness of the increasing diversity of school populations throughout the world has prompted calls for *all* teachers to be prepared for inclusive education. These calls are reflected in UNESCO (2017) policy guidance on inclusive education and in recommendations of supranational bodies such as the European Commission (2018). In answering this call, it is important to take stock of current knowledge and efforts that address the preparation of teachers. The four distinct understandings of inclusive education identified by Göransson and Nilholm's (2014) review of inclusion as: the placement of pupils with disabilities in mainstream classrooms; meeting the social/academic needs of pupils with disabilities; meeting the social/academic needs of all pupils; and creation of communities all have implications for teacher education and these were discussed in terms of legacy and equity issues that have addressed longstanding and current concerns of the field.

The chapter argued that preparing teachers for inclusive education in different parts of the world requires consensus about the values that can guide the development of practice. Such a consensus would provide a framework within which comparative work that tests the efficacy of the different approaches to teacher education discussed in this chapter can be undertaken. This work is essential to meet the international commitments to achieving SDG4 and ensuring that variation in the form and structure of teacher education within and between countries does not become an impediment to preparing teachers to implement a principled approach to inclusive education. Addressing inequalities and discrepancies in context is important but a principled approach is needed if the barriers to opportunity that exist in a globalized world where there is so much variation in context are to be overcome. A principled approach allows for variation in context by specifying the knowledge, skills and values of inclusive education understood as a human right. A project in Scotland provided a model of how a national approach enabled providers to develop distinctive programmes based on an agreement about foundational knowledge, skills and values. By demonstrating how providers worked collaboratively to embed foundational knowledge, skills and values into distinctive programmes of teacher education, the chapter suggests that agreement about universal values

can play an important role in transcending contextual differences (e.g. EADSNE 2011, 2012; Oyler 2006).

However, this is not to say that variation in content and quality of teacher education across the developed and developing world is unimportant. Variation challenges the creation of a universal approach because there are discrepancies in how inclusive education is enacted in different regions. The 2020 Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO 2020) encapsulates these challenges by documenting multiple discrepancies that (re)produce inequalities. While the form, content and balance of teacher education and professional development courses are developed in response to directives from national governments or accreditation and professional registration agencies, there are many differences of opinion about the nature of the content knowledge student teachers should learn, as well as what and how they should learn about diversity and difference – and adequate responses to those differences. The Education 2030 agenda requires that all jurisdictions reconsider how teachers can be prepared to work in schools where differences between learners are to be expected, and new ways of thinking about diversity are needed.

While considerations about what inclusive education means in different regions as well as the implications for preparing teachers in different parts of the world matter, variation in the form and structure of teacher education within and between countries needs not be an impediment to supporting *all* teachers to implement a principled approach to inclusive education. The examples presented in this chapter illustrate how it is possible to allow for variation in context by specifying the knowledge, skills and values of inclusive education. In countries where specialist pedagogues or special education teachers are part of the general education system, they should be prepared to work in support of efforts to ensure that students who are experiencing difficulties are meaningfully engaged in classroom activities. In countries where specialist training does not exist, the challenge is to ensure that children with disabilities and other difficulties are not excluded by a culture of silence about their learning needs. Bringing about this culture shift in thinking about teaching all students is necessary work for those who prepare teachers.

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